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SERVICE DATE - JANUARY 18, 2001

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

DECISION

STB Docket No. AB-277 (Sub-No. 1X)

WEST VIRGINIA NORTHERN RAILROAD COMPANY--
ABANDONMENT EXEMPTION--IN PRESTON COUNTY, WV

Decided: January 12, 2001

West Virginia Northern Railroad Company (WVN) filed a notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1152 Subpart F--Exempt Abandonments to abandon its entire line of railroad between milepost 0.0 in Tunnelton and the end of the line at milepost 10.13 near Kingwood, in Preston County, WV, a distance of 10.13 miles. Notice of the exemption was served and published in the Federal Register on December 21, 2000 (65 FR 80483-84). The exemption is scheduled to become effective on January 20, 2001.

The Board's Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) served an environmental assessment (EA) in this proceeding on December 26, 2000. In the EA, SEA states that the West Virginia State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) has not completed its review of the proposed abandonment. Therefore, SEA recommends that a condition be imposed requiring WVN to retain its interest in and take no steps to alter the historic integrity of the line until completion of the section 106 process of the National Historic Preservation Act, 16 U.S.C. 470f (NHPA).

This decision will not significantly affect either the quality of the human environment or the conservation of energy resources.

It is ordered:

1. This proceeding is reopened.
2. Upon reconsideration, the exemption of the abandonment of the rail line described above is subject to the condition that WVN retain its interest in and take no steps to alter the historic integrity of the line until completion of the section 106 process of the NHPA.

3. This decision is effective on its service date.

By the Board, David M. Konschnik, Director, Office of Proceedings.

Vernon A. Williams
Secretary